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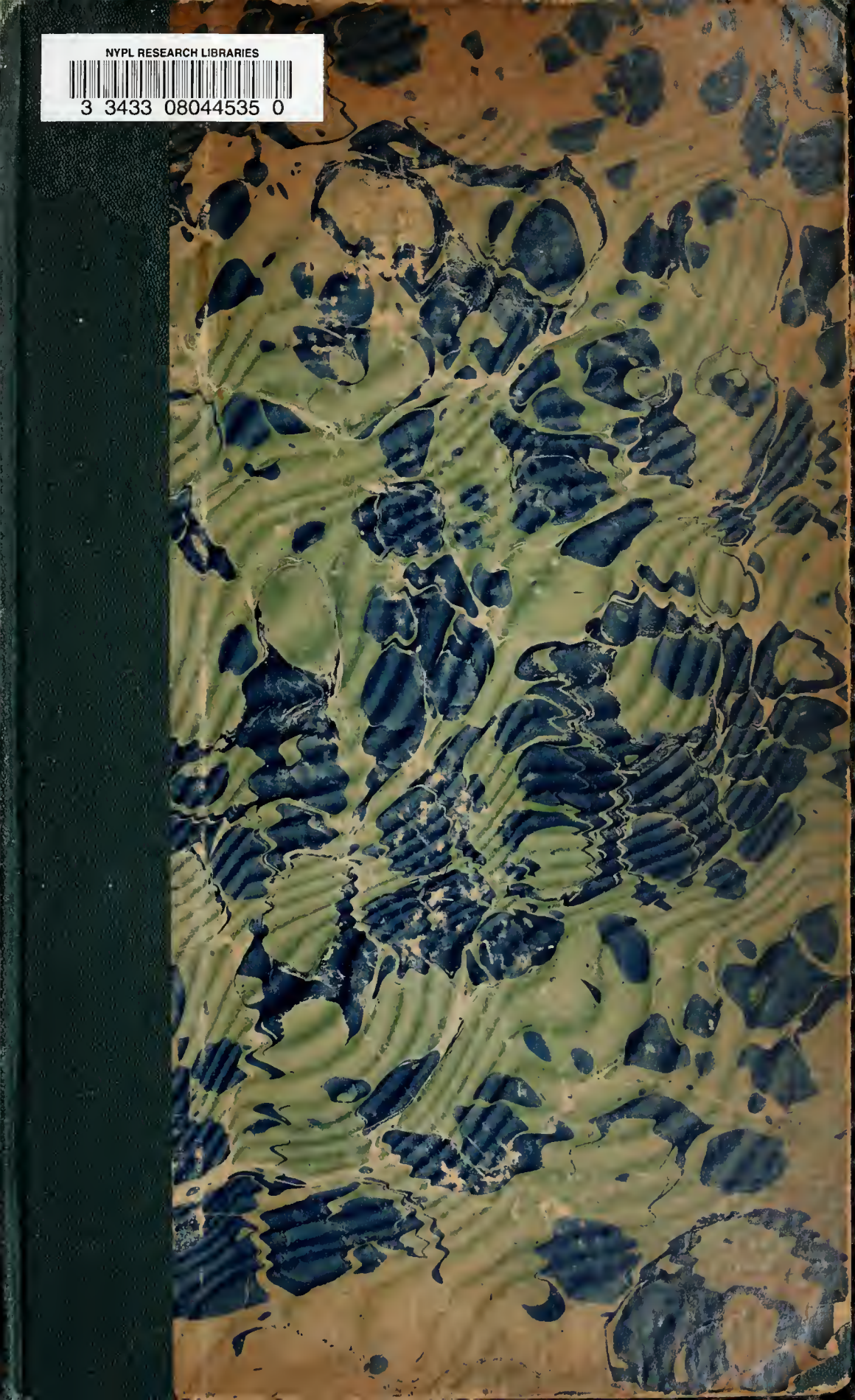

C. Worthington

A

NARRATIVE

OF THE

SUPPRESSION BY *COL. BURR*,

OF THE

HISTORY

OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF *JOHN ADAMS*,

LATE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

WRITTEN BY JOHN WOOD,

AUTHOR OF THE HISTORY OF SWITZERLAND, AND OF THE SWISS REVOLUTION.

To which is added,

A BIOGRAPHY OF THOMAS JEFFERSON,

PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,

AND OF

GENERAL HAMILTON:

With strictures on the

CONDUCT OF JOHN ADAMS,

And on the

CHARACTER OF GENERAL C. C. PINCKNEY.

EXTRACTED VERBATIM FROM THE SUPPRESSED HISTORY.

BY A CITIZEN OF NEW-YORK.

THIRD EDITION, REVISED and CORRECTED.

NEW-YORK, PRINTED.

BALTIMORE, RE-PRINTED.

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PREFACE.

THE minute facts related in the following narrative, may induce the belief in the reader, that Mr. Wood is the writer of it. It may be supposed that no one but Mr. Wood, who may be properly termed the *agent* of Mr. Burr to negociate the *suppression*, could be acquainted with the incidents appurtenant to the negociation, and which are truly related in the narrative. Such a conclusion, however, would be incorrect; and it is merely to obviate it, that this short preface is written. The narrative *is not penned by Mr. Wood, by Messrs. Barlass and Ward, nor by Mr. William P. Van Ness*; it is written by one, who, from his *connection with the parties*,* had an opportunity of knowing the very minutæ of every step taken in the suppression; nor is he induced to lay it before the public from motives of *personal ill will* to the Vice-President; considerations of a more noble and elevated nature have mixed themselves in the determination to develope the transaction. Combining the suppression with *other circumstances of a much more weighty and serious nature*, and which shall, with all due speed be laid before the public, the writer cannot resist the belief that something "is rotten in Denmark;" that under an exterior, which, though not altogether pleasing, is calculated to make false impressions on unsuspicious minds, SOMETHING EXCEEDINGLY UNPROPITIOUS TO THE FREEDOM OF THE UNION, IS AT THIS MOMENT CONTEMPLATED BY THE VICE-PRESIDENT. In this he *may* be mistaken; he sincerely hopes he is; but he entertains, he thinks, *well*

* From these words, and a variety of circumstances, it has been inferred that Mr. Wortman is the writer of this narrative. The author solemnly declares that Mr. Wortman *is not* the writer of it. That gentleman never saw a page of it in manuscript. The author shall be known at a future period.

founded doubts of the fairness of his views, and it comports with the duty he owes to freedom, to unfold them.

The present moment is peculiarly auspicious to an investigation of whatever surmises unfriendly to Mr. Burr may have gone abroad. Our annual election is over; the press is free as air; and universal placidness reigns over the nation. Under these circumstances, he invites investigation, that if he be mistaken in his opinions of the views of the Vice-President, they may be corrected by arguments and by facts. When this shall have been done, he promises with much sincerity and truth, to give to Mr. Burr a most cordial support. On the other hand, should these opinions, by an ample examination of his views, be confirmed, Mr. Burr shall meet with an opponent in the author, commensurate with his talents and his leisure.

NEW-YORK, *May*, 1802.

NARRATIVE, &c.

MR. JOHN WOOD contractedwith Messrs. Barlass and Ward, booksellers in the city of New-York, to write a History of the Administration of John Adams, late President of the United States. In conformity with the agreement, the history was written, and an edition of twelve hundred and fifty copies of it printed. As usual, it was advertised for subscription in several news-papers, many subscribers to the work were obtained, and the public were in daily expectation of witnessing its publication. The edition was bound in boards, and ready for sale early in December last, by the proprietors of it. A faithful history of an epoch so interesting in the annals of the Federal government as that of the administration of Mr. Adams, could not fail to excite public curiosity. Accordingly, an unusual solicitude was every where manifest; public expectation was awakened; and we looked forward with the pleasing hope of seeing accurately pourtrayed, those acts which had attracted the attention of Europe, excited the sensibility of the Union, and put in jeopardy its freedom and repose.

A correct history of the late administration, would be the most precious contribution a citizen could make to the community; to unfold the motives, and to delineate the measures of that administration in a well written history, would tend to consummate and to render durable the recent triumph which reason obtained over a party, who have endeavoured to impose upon the Union a polity subversive of our republican institutions. Such

is the intimate connection between freedom and history, that the one cannot exist where the other is not: they are by nature inseparable companions, and impart to each other mutual aid. History may not inaptly be termed a mirror, which truly represents past objects by reflection. It admonishes us to avoid the evil, and it equally excites us to admire and to imitate the commendable acts of past life. It may be denominated a compass, which safely guides us through the devious paths of adverse vicissitudes. Such indeed is the natural propensity of man to quiescence and forgetfulness, that, were it not for history, he would cease to remember those things which were transacted but as yesterday, although they should be essential to his safety and repose. Hence the wisdom of our custom to read annually and publicly our Declaration of Independence, which will be heard with rapture, so long as liberty shall have a friend, and virtue shall be cherished. While it reminds us of those covert and open acts by which attempts were made to enslave the colonies, it instructs us in our rights, and cordially invites us to guard against similar attempts within the union.

The administration of Mr. Adams forms an era in the annals of this country, of little less moment than that which immediately preceded our revolution. I am much mistaken if a systematic plan were not formed by it, to introduce into the Union, that precise system of internal police, to oppose which the States successfully appealed to arms. Nor is this opinion made up of mere conjecture. We have evidence strong as death of the design. That administration copied implicitly the acts of the English government, even in the worst and most vitiated period of its history. We had alien and sedition laws, spies and informers. Our dungeons were converted into habitations for patriots.

The will of the executive became the animating principle of our federal legislatures, and that will was in favour of monarchy.* The press was arrested, and the tongue stood still. Riot succeeded to riot, and he who would not bow obsequious assent to the maniacal deeds of the day, was every moment in personal danger. War was courted with all the eagerness

* In addition to the administrative acts of Mr. Adams, as well as his writings, which evidently favour a system of polity inconsonant with our own, he has frequently expressed himself friendly to a government similar to that of Great Britain. The following letter bears strong testimony of this fact, and evinces the impropriety of having placed Mr. Adams at the helm of our affairs.

"*Portsmouth, October 10th*, 1800.

"Dear Sir,

"Your agreeable favour of the 4th instant, has this moment come to hand. I am greatly rejoiced to see gentlemen of property and influence come forward at this eventful moment in the common cause of our country: I have no doubt we shall yet be saved.

"I am now packing my baggage, and shall set out in the stage to-morrow morning for the city of Washington. I hope to be in Baltimore the beginning of next month: this prevents my answering your letter so fully as I could wish, having only one moment to spare.

"In the conversation held between Mr. Adams, Mr. Taylor, and myself; Mr. Adams certainly expressed himelf (as far as my memory serves me) in the very words mentioned in your letter, viz. That he hoped and expected to see the day when Mr. Taylor and his friend Mr Giles would be convinced that the people of America could not be happy without an *keriditary Chief Magistrate and Senate*, or at least *for life*.

Believe me sincerely,
Your obedient Servant,
JOHN LANGDON."

Mr. Samuel Ringold.

and alacrity of self-defence. Hopes were entertained that out of hostility with a foreign nation, a system of polity would arise propitious to the then conductors of our affairs. Hence, though a war with that nation was, as the event has proved, easily avoidable, measures exactly fitted to precipitate us into its frightful embrace, were sedulously pursued. It is to this solicitude to drag the Union into a war with France, that those slanders are attributed which were so liberally circulated of Dr. Logan, as well as that legislative censure which was imperiously pronounced against him for his patriotic and amiable disposition in favour of peace. How ineffable was the mortification and disappointment of the war party, when it was demonstrated to the conviction of the nation, that every concession which we had a right to demand of France, could be more readily obtained without than with hostility! After the result of those amicable offices performed by Dr. Logan, was known, the mantle of delusion which had been artfully thrown over the country, rapidly disappeared.

Our citizens began to cast their eyes about them like men awakening from a disorderly dream; and they plainly perceived that our government was the principal, if not the sole obstacle to a reconciliation of the two nations. Thus the charm was broken, and the "pleasing hope, the fond desire, the longing after" a government dissimilar to our own, which was expected to arise from, and which was suspended on the event of war, instantly vanished. The foundation gave way, & the fancied edifice fell.

We have passed through these scenes without regret, because, I hope, not without profit. But may it not with confidence be said, that the advantage can only be measured by our remembrance of them? We look back upon these scenes as a traveller views from a delightful grove the desarts through which he has passed with difficulty, and without one ray of consoling hope to cheer his lan-

guid spirits. As by comparison, adversity superadds a zest to subsequent pleasure, so we shall appreciate the advantages we now enjoy by duly comparing them with the cheerless days we have left behind us. But when we consider the natural imbecility of memory, and the constant application which is necessary, even to preserve the little knowledge we have acquired by experience and research, we cannot but regret that the only history written of the administration of Mr. Adams has been *suppressed*, not by the imperious mandates of law, but by a single individual, and in all probability to promote private views incompatible with the public welfare.

The period is arrived when it is no longer necessary to conceal the fact, that the history of the administration of Mr. Adams was *suppressed* by the *Vice-President of the United States*. What the motives and objects of Mr. Burr were for the *suppression*, we are left principally to conjecture and inference to determine. In such a transaction, however, those who *know* the *Vice-President*, will readily allow that *positive* proof of the motives of the suppression is not to be exhibited. There is about his actions a *cunning*, a sort of *legerdemain*, which, while it defies conclusive proof, eludes the most acute research. In every thing therefore, which relates to this gentleman, no higher a species of testimony *ought* to be *expected*, than that of a circumstantial or presumptive nature. All the three kinds of proof indeed, are in their nature nothing more than comparative, and pursuing degrees of comparison to the extent of their applicability, *and no further*, it may be truly affirmed, that *presumptive* proof of whatevers bear relation to Mr. Burr, is as *positive*, as the *most absolute* evidence against plain, honest citizens. Habituated to intrigue, and distinguished by the *secrecy and celerity* of his movements, it is problematical whether even his confidential friends could bring home

to him a single act of his of moment. It is said, and I believe with truth, that one of his primary political maxims is, never to *converse* on an important subject in the presence of *two men !* Nor is it, it is believed, less a maxim with him to avoid communicating, even to his confidants, his ideas in writing on political subjects. Oral communication is his element, and even *this* is regulated by a rule of *secrecy* so nice, as to forbid his conversing on material affairs in the presence of more than one man ! Thus fortified by subtle rules from which he never departs, it will not be expected that I can so far enter his cabinet of curious secrets as to adduce that sort of testimony concerning the suppression of the history, as will impose conviction on every mind, that it was suppressed with views unfriendly to the administration of Mr. *Jefferson*. Nor indeed will this be strenuously insisted on. I shall content myself in the *present publication*, with offering a few remarks in addition to what has been said, and with laying the facts I possess before the public, who are most competent to form a correct opinion of the subject.

Habituated to secret movements and dark consultations, it may be said, that the covert manner in which Mr. Burr carried on the negociation for the suppression of the history, was nothing out of the ordinary way in which he conducts his political affairs. But let it not be forgotten, that Mr. Burr possesses sufficient powers of mind to distinguish between what requires concealment and what does not ; and that both the one and the other are by him regulated by his inordinate views of personal ambition. In matters in which the public are concerned, secrecy which abhors disclosure and shuns the light of day, ill comports with the general welfare. Nor is it to be presumed the public can with safety, repose confidence in him who appears solicitous only to wrap his actions in profound

mystery. Such conduct is calculated to inspire jealousy and distrust. A State juggler, who, retiring from the public eye, spreads mischief by his puppets, may astonish with his ropes and pullies the satellites by whom he is surrounded; but a sensible public, knowing their rights and valuing their liberty, will abandon him as they would flee from a destructive pestilence.

Thus Mr. Burr is conducting his political affairs, and mounting step by step to the summit of political authority. Versed in the art of hocus-pocus, while sitting in his state-room waiting the entrance of his political tools into the anti-chamber, his mandates fly through the union and extend to its extremities. Hence his invisible spirit insinuates itself into every circle, and with its deleterious qualities corrupts whatever it touches. Operating upon the public by numerous agents, confidence must sometimes be *misplaced*; and from necessity he is reluctantly constrained to employ men who are either incompetent to carry into execution his secret designs, or who, vainly proud of their menial and dishonourable offices, proclaim their business by unfolding their connection. Hence, to know the mind of the principal, it is only necessary to sound the opinion of the agent. To ascertain the views of the former, nothing more is requisite than to hear the latter speak. These agents differ however in degrees of taciturnity and circumspection. Some, perhaps from long habit, are little inferior in subtility, in simulation and dissimulation to the prime mover. But there is *one*, who, unfortunately for Mr. Burr, divulges secrets confided to him with great indiscretion. He is young, impetuous, and loquacious: And, if general report be true, nature (sometimes sportive) placed in his head the tongue of a woman. It is probable that this young man, without intending it, has injured Mr. Burr much. This, no doubt, is the effect of

an over-zeal, at all hazards and by all means, to lift him to the pinnacle of political glory. Whether this ardency of zeal arises from *expectancy* or *disappointment* is not precisely known ; it is however believed that both these ingredients are mingled with those motives which impel the youth to move with the velocity of Mercury, and to chatter with the fluency of a magpye !

The suppression of the history, is one of those items in the catalogue of Mr. Burr's intrigues, which required, from a variety of considerations, unusual care to hide it from the public. But here the danger to which he was exposed, was equal to the novelty and magnitude of the undertaking. The suppression could not be effected by the ordinary agents, not even by the *subtlest* class. It was necessary to call in, in some respects, extraneous aid. In this there was danger. For in proportion to the multiplication of agents, the *craft* with its artifices were liable to exposure. Of this no one could be more sensible than the Vice-President. The suppression was however a favorite point ; to effect it was an essential part of his general system of finesse ; and something must therefore be risked.

Mr. Wood, the writer of the *suppressed* history, and Mr. Burr, have long been intimate. When the latter first heard that the former was about to write a history of the administration of Mr. Adams, he expressed a desire to see him on the subject. Accordingly an interview was had, but for what particular purpose is not precisely ascertained. It is, however, known, and asserted as true, that Mr. Burr furnished Mr. Wood with materials for writing *his own biography*, which is a master-piece of the hyperbolic, and exhibits in Mr. Burr, to whom the biography of himself was submitted by Mr. Wood for inspection, no common degree of vanity. His revolutionary services,

which were so trifling as to escape the notice of the writers of the different histories of the revolution now extant, were so represented by Mr. Wood as to dazzle the reader with the brilliancy of his exploits. The painting was undoubtedly fine, but it bears no characteristic resemblance of the original. For this I am not disposed to censure Mr. Wood, who drew the martial character and revolutionary atchievements of the Vice-President from materials with which he was furnished by *himself*. He had no public documents to which he could have recourse. History is silent as the grave concerning the revolutionary services of Mr. Burr. Ramsay never mentions him once in his two volumes, and it is believed the same may be said of Gordon and others. This is sufficiently excusatory of Mr. Wood. He was to write a biography of Mr. Burr; he could not write it without materials; these could only be furnished by him who was to form the subject of the biographic eulogium; and if they were improper ones, the fault was attributable, not to Mr. Wood, but to Mr. Burr, who supplied him with them. But while I censure misrepresentation in others, it is peculiarly incumbent on me to avoid being guilty of it myself. I am equally concerned with other men in doing justice to all, and, following her pleasing dictates, I sincerely declare it as my opinion, that although Mr. Burr has no good title to the *martial* character of *Buonaparte*, he is not altogether destitute of military merit. Nature may have formed him for an *Anthony*, but may it not be asked whether she has endued him with the just and magnanimous soul of *Aristides*?

Proceeding in this strain of exaggeration, the character given of Mr. Burr in other respects in the suppressed history, is liable to censure. This was, however, no doubt done by Mr. Wood, as an additional recommendation of the Vice-Presi-

dent to the favor of his fellow-citizens. When it was written, Mr. Wood could have had no idea of Mr. Burr's subtle machinations to supplant Mr. Jefferson, nor of his agents employed in this dishonourable work.

The 7th number of Hardie's "New Biographical Dictionary," page 406-7, contains an elegantly drawn portrait of the Vice-President's father by Governor Livingston. Aaron Burr (the father of the Vice-President) was undoubtedly a man of amiable manners, of good erudition, and of a sublime genius. He has left behind him a character honourable to his memory, honourable to his country, and which will command esteem, if not reverence, while learning, and piety, and patriotism shall have a friend. Although governor Livingston's character, therefore, of this worthy man, may be a little overstrained, we view without reluctance the exuberant fancy of the limner, and readily pardon trifling aberrations from exactitude. The character given by governor Livingston of the father, Mr. Wood asserts in the suppressed history, which contains the extract, is exactly applicable to the son. How far this is correct, I leave the reader to judge for himself.

"Governor Livingston, speaking of the assiduity and usefulness of the father of the Vice-President, thus expresses himself." "Though a person of a slender and delicate make, to encounter fatigue, he had a heart of steel; and for the dispatch of business, the most amazing talents joined to a constancy of mind, that ensured success in spite of every obstacle. As long as an enterprize appeared not absolutely impossible, he knew no discouragement; but in proportion to its difficulty augmented his diligence: and by an insuperable fortitude, *frequently accomplished what his friends and acquaintance conceived utterly impracticable.*"*

* As far as the words in *italics* relate to the *intrigues* of the Vice-President, they are applicable.

This passage is extracted *verbatim* from the *suppressed* history ; it is however to be found, as I before stated, and as Mr. Wood has himself also stated, in " Hardie's Biographical Dictionary."

Thus deified, Mr. Burr could not but be pleased with the transcendant character given of him by his new biographer. He little imagined it would ever be publicly known, that the outlines of it were drawn by himself. Charmed with the notion of being transformed into a celestial being, he was solicitous to view his likeness in print before the history was issued to the public.

In November 1801 Mr. Burr visited Philadelphia to project with others a *new Manhattan bank*. As usual, in passing through the state of New-Jersey, it is believed on credible information, he waited on the *honourable* Jonathan Dayton. Between this *gentleman* and Col. Burr, an uninterrupted and cordial intercourse has taken place ever since the celebrated struggle in the house of representatives for a federal executive. Whether Mr. Wood's history formed a subject of their colloquies on national affairs, is not known ; but from a variety of circumstances it is deemed probable. For although Mr. Burr had not seen the whole of the sheets as they were issued from the press, he was sufficiently acquainted with the contents of the history to form a pretty accurate notion of its tenor. He had reason to believe, for instance, that the characters who acted conspicuous parts in the federal drama of 1798-9, were severely lashed by Mr. Wood.

On the 4th or 5th of December, 1801, Mr. Burr, after the project of the new Philadelphia bank was completed, returned to New-York. The history was then ready for sale, and was to have been issued to the public the following week. One of his first enquiries was about it, and Mr. Wood was requested by Mr. Burr to bring a copy of it to his house that he might peruse the character given

of himself previous to the publication of the history. This request was complied with, and Mr. Burr either discovered or pretended to have discovered *some errors* in his biography *respecting dates.* He very sagaciously felicitated himself on the discovery before the history was given to the public ; desired Mr. Wood to leave the copy with him, and promised (after the errors of date were corrected) to defray the expence of printing a new sheet of his own life and exploits. These errors would have made Mr. Burr about *fifty*, whereas he stated he was not more than *forty-five* years of age. Viewing matters *prospectively*, it was deemed of some consequence to correct the mis-dates. To one who is looking forward to the presidency ; to gain, at the age of fifty, five years on the side of youth, is no inconsiderable acquisition !

According to promise, Mr. Wood waited on Mr. Burr the following morning to receive the copy with the corrections ; some *evil genius*, however, had prompted Mr. Burr to read the volume throughout, and *more errors* were discovered. These were enumerated to Mr. Wood with great apparent candor and sincerity.* It was objected that the character of Mr. Hamilton, Charles C. Pinckney, Jonathan Dayton, and General Washington were not accurately delineated ; and it was added with *great tenderness* that the book contained many *libellous* passages. He therefore enquired whether an agreement could not be made with Barlass and Ward to *suppress it ?* He conceived that the character of Mr. Hamilton was *misrepresented*, meaning where encomium was bestowed upon him it was unmerited—that Mr. Charles C. Pinckney, who was represented by Mr. Wood as a person of

* The reader may rely, if he please, implicitly on the following facts. They are indubitable. They can be proved in a court of law if necessary.

less integrity than Mr. Hamilton, was a man of *purer principle* than any other in the union. Upon General Washington, undeserved eulogiums he said, had been lavished; and that during his presidency he had evinced himself a person possessed of unbounded vanity, without talents either as a soldier or a scholar. Continuing his criticisms, Mr. Wood, he observed, had wholly mistaken the character of the *honourable* Jonathan Dayton. Referring to his connection with Francis Childs, which Mr. Wood had noticed in his history to the disgrace of Mr. Dayton, he declared that Childs was a *scoundrel*, and indebted to Mr. Dayton in the sum of *one hundred thousand dollars*. The character given by Mr. Wood of Mr. Adams, he liked; it was a bad one, and he thought it representative of the ex-president.* Mr. Burr reserved his critical remarks on the character given by Mr. Wood of Mr. Jefferson to the last. This he did not think exactly descriptive of that illustrious person. He observed that Mr. Jefferson was not a man of *genius*; he was a *plodding*, *mechanical* person, of little activity of mind, and possessed of a judgment not very discriminative. Mr. Jefferson he said had also another great failing; he courted and was fond of popularity! He suggested to Mr. Wood the propriety of writing his character anew, and promised to furnish him with facts relative to Mr. Jefferson which were little known to the public, and which would be found exceedingly inter-

* The reader is referred for information on this subject to Dayton's connection with Francis Childs, published in a pamphlet entitled, "Dayton's Speculations in Sixteen Letters," and to a bill filed in the court of Chancery of this state, by Dayton and Lawrence against Childs. These are sufficient to sink Dayton even in his own estimation.

esting. Respecting the *libellous* passages contained in the history, Mr. Burr was mute; he did not even condescend to mention one of them. His whole soul seemed absorbed in disposing of certain persons as Buonaparte disposes of petty nations, to gratify his ambition and to exalt his fame.*

* It is difficult to ascertain the precise point at which Mr. Burr aims. Why, for example, he wishes to exalt the character of Mr. Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, and debase that of Mr. Hamilton, may seem, at first glance, enigmatical. It is known that Mr. Pinckney was and is the favourite of Mr. Hamilton. But it is also known that Mr. Hamilton used his influence to obtain, at the presidential election, after the votes were known to be equal, the elevation of Mr. Jefferson to the chair of state in preference to that of Mr. Burr. It is probable that Mr. Burr is intriguing to place, with the federalists, Mr. Pinckney in the presidential chair at the next election, and to effect, by so doing, a continuation of himself in the second office of government. This is the way in which he expects to make his peace with them. He is now conscious that *he is too well known to be supported by the republicans.* Viewing the matter then in this light, which I think not a false one, Mr. Hamilton is evidently in his way!! Mr. Burr would willingly go through another vice-presidency probation with Mr. Pinckney at his head, to ascend afterwards to the presidency. This, I am of opinion, he now judges, and judges rightly, to be his dernier resort.

Whether the New-England states, (Massachusetts and Connecticut I mean, for New-Hampshire, Vermont, and Rhode-Island, are now republican,) will cordially co-operate to promote such a project, is yet to be ascertained. It is certain that Mr. Adams is the favourite of those two States, as well as of many respectable and influential federalists in some of the other States. Mr. Burr may not however, consider Mr. Adams a very powerful opponent; yet his anxious desire that the frightful but just portrait of the Ex-President, should go to the public unaltered, is

These were the reasons assigned by Mr. Burr for his solicitude to suppress the whole edition of the history of the administration, to have *a new history written under his immediate inspection, and to be made up of materials to be furnished principally by himself*. These he promised to supply in abundance, and dilated on the value such a production would be of to the Union. By way of super-inducement, he stated that facts would transpire in Congress in the course of ten or twelve days, which would astonish the nation, and convince Mr. Wood that the notions he had entertained of the various characters just enumerated, were erroneous. But over the history, Mr. Wood had no controul; he had written it by contract for Barlass and Ward, who were the sole owners of it. Being, however, the

calculated to induce the belief that he entertains some apprehensions on this ground. Dayton is friendly to Pinckney, and on this account it is, (as well as others of a delicate nature, which I will explain in another publication,) that so cordial a reciprocity of sentiment and good offices daily takes place between Mr. Burr and himself. That Mr. Burr is unfriendly to the character of WASHINGTON, is not strange. That they entertained a mutual dislike of each other while the General was living, is well known. That Mr. Burr is hostile to Mr. Jefferson, is nothing new to well informed men. That he avails himself of every means of every convenient opportunity to render his administration unpopular, is too notorious to be questioned by any man conversant with our affairs. Hence we may account for Mr. Jefferson's not being "a man of genius," for his being "a plodding, mechanical person," and for his "love of popularity." Strange that a man who is not scrupulous about the means by which he is essaying to mount to the most dignified office on earth, should censure in malignant whispers, Mr. Jefferson's "love of popularity!"

writer of the history, he was thought by Mr. Burr the most eligible person to negociate its suppression. He therefore requested Mr. Wood to wait on Barlass and Ward to make an agreement with them to suppress it, and promised that *he and his friends* would bear the expence which might be agreed upon. Not clearly perceiving Mr. Burr's views for wishing it to be suppressed, and being anxious, as every author necessarily is, to make his work as perfect as possible, Mr. Wood accepted the office of *agent to Mr. Burr*, and, receiving suitable instructions, commenced the negociation.*

There was one difficulty in the suppression which it was necessary immediately to remove. In the preceding week a copy of the history had been sent to London by the *Juliana*, for publication. It was necessary to countermand the order of publication immediately. Had the history been published in London, the suppression of it here would not have answered the intended end. The suppression was to be universal and entire. After its publication in London, it would soon have reached America. To this point, therefore, the talents and address of the negociator were early directed.

* Mr. Burr enquired of Mr. wood, if he was not acquainted with a person who had influence over Mr. Barlass? He was referred to one of the professors of Columbia College, a gentleman of great respectability. To this gentlemen Mr. Burr applied, and requested his good offices to obtain the suppression of the edition of the history. But when the professor was informed the work was to be suppressed to favour some *federal* gentlemen, whose characters he did not admire, and also that the suppression was to be kept *a profound secret*, he very properly declined having any thing to do with it.

After Mr. Wood had received his instructions from Mr. Burr, he applied immediately to Barlass and Ward, and entered on the duties of his office. But they were averse to informal negociation; they would not listen to verbal overtures. Accordingly Mr. Wood addressed to them the following *note, under the inspection of Mr. Burr.*

"New-York, December 11th, 1801.

"Gentlemen,

"I hereby propose to indemnify you for the nett expences of printing the history of the administration of John Adams, including the paper thereof, and to furnish you with a new manuscript copy in the space of *ten days from this date*, on condition that the present edition be entirely suppressed. *Should it not be suppressed, you will be prosecuted for the libels it contains.**

I am your's, Gentlemen,

JOHN WOOD.

"*Messrs. Barlass and Ward.*"

To Mr. Wood's note the following answer was received.

"New-York, December 11th, 1801.

"Sir,

"We have received your proposals, wherein you offer to indemnify us for our nett expences, and give us another manuscript copy within the space of ten days, provided we agree to suppress the edition which we have printed.

"We have no objection to suppress the work, provided we receive a competent indemnification. The nett expences would be no object to us, con-

* It had been said by Mr. Burr, that if the proprietors would not suppress the work, they would (or should) be prosecuted by Mr. Dayton, who would not allow them the option of giving up the *author.*

sidering the risk we have run, and the trouble we have had; and also, the uncertainty but what we should be put to the same trouble again after we had printed the altered copy.—However we offer you the following conditions, which, if you agree to, you may depend upon the most strict compliance on our part.

" 1st. We will entirely suppress the edition, provided we receive two thousand dollars, or,

2d " We will run the risk of printing another edition, and destroy the one we have finished, for fifteen hundred dollars.

" N. B. If neither of the above proposals should be agreed to by you, we must publish the work with an appendix, wherein you may insert any corrections you may think proper.

M. WARD & Co.
WM. BARLASS."

"*Mr. John Wood.*"

To this letter Barlass and Ward received no immediate answer. It was most essential, in the first stages of the negociation, to stay the publication of the copy sent to London.—Concerning this previous arrangment, Mr. Wood was reduced to a troublesome alternative. To stop the publication of the London copy was absolutely indispensable. On the 12th of December the brig Recovery was to sail from this port to Greenock, and it was not known when another opportunity might occur. It was therefore necessary to transmit orders to London by the Recovery to delay the publication of the copy until further instructions should be received. Here an interesting scene presented itself, and Mr. Wood was put to a severe trial. The first branch of his instructions was unequivocal and imperative on this head, *that he was not to mention the*

name of his employer, Mr. Burr, except in a case of the utmost necessity. Although Mr. Wood might have availed himself of this latitude of phraseology, and have exercised a corresponding discretion, he was aptly cautious lest unfavorable circumstances should result from possible mis-judgment. Barlass and Ward were unwilling to supercede their orders to publish the copy sent to London, without being previously assured that no loss to them should ensue from the act: nor was Mr. Wood disposed to be responsible for money considerations which the negociation might involve: he viewed himself in the transaction simply as the agent of the Vice-President. In this dilemma what was he to do? During the whole of this important day, which was to decide—I will not say the fate of America—but of the edition, no access could be had to Mr. Burr, for he had company! This hindered Mr. Wood from representing to Mr. Burr, the extreme urgency of the case, and from having the benefit of his advice as to the proper expedient to be adopted in it. His only alternative therefore, was to communicate to Barlass and Ward the name of the person for whom he was negociating the suppression. This he did, but with so much prudence and ability, as to induce Barlass and Ward to enter into a written agreement *to forfeit three hundred dollars in case they divulged Mr. Burr's name.* *

To this part of the negociation Mr. Wood received the following note:

* This article is now in the hands of Mr. William P. Van Ness, of this city. This gentleman soon afterwards became a confidential and active agent of Mr. Burr in the suppression. It was with him Mr. Wood subsequently advised when Mr. Burr was absent, or when he was inconvenient to be approached!

" New York, December 12, 1891.

"Sir

" We received your note* requesting us to stop the copy, which we sent to England, of your history, at the request of Mr. Burr; at your desire we certify *that we look to Mr. Burr for compensation, and not to you.*

" M. WARD & Co.
" WILLIAM BARLASS."

" Mr. JOHN WOOD."

This difficulty being surmounted, orders were sent to London by the Recovery to prevent the publication of the copy. So far an important point was gained to Mr. Burr.

The next item in Mr. Wood's instructions directed him to prevail on Barlass and Ward, to accept the *nett amount* which the edition had actually cost, as the price of its suppression. We have already seen by their letter of December 11th, that the sum demanded was two thousand dollars, or fifteen hundred and a new copy. But by a calculation made on the part of Mr. Burr, it was found that the entire expence of printing the edition had perhaps cost ten, but certainly not more than eleven hundred dollars, and a determination was accordingly formed not to give a larger sum. Conformably to it, the proposition contained in Mr. Wood's note of December 11th, was now again propounded, and by Barlass and Ward again refused. Frequent interviews were had without coming to a final settlement. Mr. Wood was limited in his instructions to eleven hundred dollars, a sum which the proprietors of the book thought much too small.

* This note is also in the hands of Mr. William P. Van Ness.

Here Mr. Burr resorted to a *happy* expedient to compel Barlass and Ward to acceed to his proposition. It has already been stated that he was to furnish Mr. Wood with materials for writing new biographies of the President, Mr. Hamilton, C. C. Pinckney, Dayton, &c. He was also to supply him with such matter as would make the work appear almost entirely new. It was determined that the negociation should be prosecuted with less vigour; that it should be carried on in such a way as would be nearly equivalent to a suspension. During this relaxation, Mr. Wood was to compose *a new history* of the administration, preserving such parts only of the old one as accorded with the views of the vice-president. And as expidition was the soul of the expedient, an assistant to Mr. Wood was to be procured. Mr. Cornelius Van Ness, brother to Mr. William P. Van Ness, was mentioned by Mr. Burr as a trusty person, and truly fitted for the office. This young gentleman was to arrange the facts, and to lay them before Mr. Wood sheet by sheet in such order as that he might easily give to them his classical dress. As the sheets were thus written, they were to be sent to Mr. William A. Davis,* the *printer*, who it was supposed could work off an addition of twelve hundred and fifty copies (the number of Barlass and Ward's edition) in twelve or fourteen days. This was to be done with that secrecy and promptitude which characterize the movements of the vice-president.—The first impression of the edition of the new history was to be presented to Barlass and Ward, accompanied with the single remark, that if they

* It is not ascertained whether Mr. Davis knew of this project. Perhaps he did. It is mentioned here as a *cabinet secret*, and as a real fact.

wou'd suppress *their edition*, and take the *new one* in exchange, it would be well : if not, they might publish it, but that the *new one* would also be published.

This was an admiral project ; like killing two birds with one stone, it would have secured to Mr. Burr two objects at once. In this case, Barlass and Ward would have found it their interest to *suppress* their *own edition*, and take the edition of the *new history* in exchange. On the other hand the price of the suppression would have been no greater than the price of printing the edition of the *new history*. Another advantage to Mr. Burr would have resulted from this delightful scheme ; the *new history* would have been composed to please his own palate !*

Pending this *projet*, Barlass and Ward addressed to Mr. Wood the following letter :—

New-York, December 16, 1801.

Mr. Wood,

Having been delayed in the publication of your history some time, and having ordered back the copy we transmitted to London, by your order, we wish to come to some final determination upon the subject, as it will be impossible for us to be hindered in the publication any longer ; we therefore as our ultimate conditions, offer you the following :

We will suppress the printed edition for 1250 dollars, provided we receive *gratis*, another copy within the space of days.

* This remark is not made in derogation of Mr. Wood. The *new history* was to be written according to the materials furnished by Mr. Burr ; and Mr. Wood's confidence in that gentleman, would have induced him to think them *sound*.

The money we have actually paid out amounts to 1050 dollars. The time we have lost by being delayed, the trouble we have had, the loss we shall sustain in stopping the London copy, and the disadvantage in laying a considerable time out of our money, we may calculate (at least) at 200 dollars: which sum, added to what we have already paid, is 1250 dollars.

If you are not inclined to agree to the above proposition, we will proceed to publish the work, you giving us immediately the corrections, which we will print in an appendix, but which must not exceed eight pages.

M. WARD & Co.
WILLIAM BARLASS.

Mr. JOHN WOOD.

This letter plainly evinced that Barlass and Ward were descending rapidly from their lofty eminence. Hopes were entertained that by proper management the suppression might be effected to the satisfaction of both parties for eleven hundred dollars. The definitive proposition was accordingly made to Barlass and Ward to give them that sum with the copy right of a *new history*. This mode upon the whole was preferred by Mr. Burr, since by it an amicable adjustment it was thought might be effected with suitable secrecy, and an edition of a new history be issued without the country being at all aware of the exchange.

Barlass and Ward closed with Mr. Wood's proposition to give them, to suppress the work, 1100 dollars and the copy-right of the new history. The letter expressive of their assent to it is now in the possession of Mr. William P. Van Ness. One

half of the amount was to be paid *immediately* in specie, the other in notes at two and three months. *Mr. Burr ratified the agreement and promised to pay the money in good faith.* This contract was made about the 18th of December.

Barlass and Ward were now in daily expectation of receiving the money and the notes. Day succeeded to day but without producing either. Fearful of disappointment they became alarmed. They were the more anxious since they were apprehensive that the agreement to suppress the work would become generally known, which, should Mr. Burr eventually recede from the contract, would injure the sale of the edition. Amid this anxiety of mind they received a note from Mr. Wood, dated December 26th, offering them *two hundred dollars* to relinquish their claim to the copy-right of the *new history.* To this note the following one is an answer.

New-York, December 26, 1801.

MR. WOOD,

We agree to deliver up to you the copy-right of the new history of the administration of John Adams, for two hundred dollars* as soon as we have received the money which we are to receive for suppressing the edition which we have printed.

M. WARD & Co.
WILLIAM BARLASS.

This proposition to relinquish the copy-right was made from the idea that the proceeds of the sale of an edition of the *new history* would be at least

* Mr. Ward and Co. relinquished their claim to the copy right on condition that they were to have the printing of the *new history.* Mr. Barlass was *promised* one hundred dollars for the relinquishment of his claim.

equivalent to the sum which *was to be paid* for the suppression of the *first one*. Viewing the matter in this light, it was concluded that Barlass and Ward might be indemnified for the suppression of the history, without Mr. Burr being eventually a loser by it.

Here the negociation ended, and nothing was wanting to carry it completely into execution but the due fulfilment of the stipulations mutually ratified and duly exchanged, to wit, the payment of the 1100 dollars for the suppression, and 100 to Mr. Barlass for the relinquishment of his claim to the copy-right of the new history. A day was appointed to fulfil the agreement, but appointed in vain.

The appointed day was that on which Mr. Burr left this city, to take his seat in the senate of the United States. He had promised to pay the money and to give the notes ; but to do either was inconvenient.

Previous to his departure, however, he informed Mr. Wood, who waited on him for the purpose, that he had given orders to Mr. William P. Van Ness to settle the business with Barlass and Ward, who would accordingly do so.

In conformity with the orders given by Mr. Burr to Mr. William P. Van Ness, Barlass and Ward applied to him for settlement: this was (I believe) the day after the vice-president left this city for Washington. Mr. Van Ness hesitated ; said that Mr. Burr would have paid the money if he had had it, and expressed doubts of his ability to raise the sum himself. Frequent interviews were subsequently had, but without producing the desired effect. Barlass and Ward now found that it was necessary to adopt vigorous measures to enforce the

fulfilment of the agreement. Accordingly, Mr. Counsellor Wortman was consulted as to the propriety of instituting a suit against the vice president for the recovery of the sum promised to be paid for the suppression of the edition. But it was thought most prudent again to apply to Mr. Burr, before a measure so harsh as an appeal to law was resorted to.

This application Mr. William P. Van Ness made by letter, which was received by Mr. Burr at Philadelphia, on his way to Washington. Mr. Van Ness' letter communicated to Mr. Burr the information (which was true) that the suppression had become a subject of public conversation, and that *his name* had been publicly mentioned as the person at whose instance the suppression had been effected. Mr. Burr was also informed in the letter, that Barlass and Ward looked to him for the sum agreed to be paid for the suppression. This is the import of the letter as mentioned by Mr. Van Ness to Barlass and Ward, who were not permitted to see it.

Mr. Burr's reply was laconic and pithy. It was addressed to Mr. Van Ness. The letter was not seen by Barlass and Ward; but the substance of it as communicated *verbally* by Van Ness to them is as follows:—

"He (Mr. Burr) was *surprized* his name was mentioned in the transaction; he was happy however, the book was suppressed; he was sorry the business was not settled; but if they (Barlass and Ward) looked to him for the money they might do so." This was accepted by Barlass and Ward as a refusal to fulfil the agreement.

By this time the suppression, the manner in which it had been accomplished and by and for whom, had become generally known. The novel-

ty of the transaction excited much curious speculation. This was considered by Barlass and Ward unfavourable to the sale of the work, even if they should be inclined, in this discouraging state of things, to have recourse to it to indemnify themselves for the expence they had incurred in printing the edition.

They therefore resolved to try another expedient to induce Mr. Burr to comply with the conditions of the contract. They imagined that as the second officer in government he would have some concern for his reputation. Soaring to the first office in the Commonwealth they could not conceive that, for the paltry sum of 1200 dollars, he would suffer his character to be stained by a public exposition of so singular a transaction.

Accordingly Barlass and Ward communicated to Mr. William P. Van Ness their intention to publish the history with an appendix, setting forth the negociation, its nature, for whom it was commenced, the object which they thought was meant to be effected by it, together with the correspondence of the two parties. This produced a request from Mr. Van Ness, that they would wait until a letter could be sent to and an answer received from Washington.

Both Mr. Van Ness and Mr. Wood wrote to Mr. Burr, informing him of the intention of Barlass and Ward to publish the history with an appendix as stated, provided he did not immediately order the money to be paid. Mr. Wood expressed his surprise that this had not been done.

No answer was returned to the letter of Mr. Wood; and nothing satisfactory was communicated by Van Ness to Barlass and Ward, who now came to a resolution to prosecute Mr. Burr for the conditioned sum.

To enable them to do this, Mr. Wood was requested by Barlass and Ward to give them an affidavit of his connection with Mr. Burr in the suppression. This request was complied with, and Mr. Wood's affidavit was taken by Mr. Jonathan Pearsee, jun. Attorney at Law, and Notary Public in this city. The affidavit is now in the possession of Mr. William P. Van Ness. It states, that Mr. Wood "was employed by Mr. Burr about the beginning of December 1801, to bargain with Barlass and Ward for the suppression of the history of the administration of John Adams, late President of the United States, written by himself. That after several conferrences, he made an agreement with them to suppress it for 1100 dollars, one half to be paid in cash, and the other in notes at two and three months. One hundred dollars in addition were to be paid to Mr. Barlass for relinquishing his share of the copy right of the *new history*. That with this conclusion Mr. Burr was satisfied and promised to pay the money according to contract."*

Possessed of this affidavit, Barlass and Ward resorted to Richard Harrison, esq. late Recorder of this city, for his advice. Mr. Harrison viewed Mr. Wood as the *mere agent of Mr. Burr* in the negociation; and he entertained no doubt of the liability of Mr. Burr to the payment of the sum agreed upon for the suppression of the edition; he therefore advised a prosecution.

* This is copied from the writing given to Mr. Pearsee by Mr. Wood, and from which the affidavit was drawn up. It is but justice, however, to Mr. Pearsee to say, that the copy was not obtained from him; it was had from a very different quarter.

Still, however, a suit was not prefered. Sensible of the expence and of the "law's delay," they chose to make another effort to obtain the sum by gentle means in preference to appealing to the law.

Here a dawn of hope beamed upon them. Finding that Barlass and Ward were serious, and that bringing the matter before a court would not add to the fading lustre of the vice-president, Mr. Van Ness promised to pay the money.

Obstacles, however, occurred which occasioned procrostination of payment. Mr. William P. Van Ness penned a certificate, setting forth that Mr. Burr had nothing to do with the suppression, and that he knew nothing of the history until his return from Philadelphia! * This Mr. Wood was requested to sign, which he refused. In the certificate it was also stated that when Mr. Burr discovered his name was mentioned in the history, he was much offended! He wished not to be named in any political work! Mr. Wood was unwilling to set his hand to a paper of falshoods; and the artful project, therefore, of Mr. Van Ness to acquit Mr. Burr of the transaction, failed.

Mr. Van Ness now declared that he would give no more for the suppression than one thousand dollars, and that Mr. Barlass should abandon his claim to the one hundred which it was agreed should be given to him for his share of the copy right of the *new history*. Perceiving the obstacles which were thrown in the way of an adjustment agreeably to the original contract, Barlass and Ward bowed assent. So that one thousand dollars only were to be paid.

* Mr. Van Ness did not say that had he received instructions from Mr. Burr to make this proposition.

Writings were now to be executed to bind Barlass and Ward and Mr. Wood, to *an entire suppression of the history*. It was proposed by Mr. William P. Van Ness, that Mr. Wood should bind himself under a heavy penalty *never to write another history of the administration of Mr. Adams, nor any thing about the suppression of the one which he had written!* This was rejected. Mr. Wood was ready to enter into a contract not to publish or cause to be published the contents of the suppressed history. This he thought sufficient. He saw no reason why he should not, if he were inclined, write *another* history of the administration. He would not consent to be restrained from writing by any man. He considered himself at liberty in future to write or not to write as it should seem to him meet; he was therefore unwilling to receive the shackles which Mr. Van Ness graciously attempted to impose upon him.

Accordingly, a new instrument was draughted for Mr. Wood, which simply restrains him from publishing or causing to be published *the whole* or *any part* of the contents of the *suppressed history*. This he signed.

Suitable bonds were also draughted for Barlass and Ward which they executed; and *the one thousand dollars was paid to them by William P. Van Ness on or about the 12th day of May*, 1802.

On the 13th of May the whole edition, consisting of twelve hundred and fifty copies, was removed, *between four and five o'clock of the morning*, from *Mr. Ward's book-store to the house of Mr. William P. Van Ness*.

The reader may perhaps ask why the *new history* has not been published? The answer is simple.

Mr. Burr promised Mr. Wood, when he left this city for Washington, to furnish him with the materials for it in ten days. This, however, has not been done. It has been stated, that when Mr. Burr went from New-York to take his seat in the senate, he was unconscious that his name had been mentioned as the person to gratify whom the suppression was negociated. With this circumstance he afterwards became acquainted, and it is probable he very properly concluded that Mr. Wood would not answer his purpose! !

Such has been the rise, progress, and final conclusion of this singular transaction; concerning which it may not be improper to offer a few reflections.

There are two modes of abridging the freedom of the *press*; the one by law, the other by purchasing literary productions, and by so doing making that invaluable Palladium of our Rights subservient to private views. The former is more pernicious because more universal. The latter is baleful only in proportion to the inclination and means of individuals to *suppress* publications, and the venality of authors. Both are, however, of one criminal nature; and were they alike extensive in their operations, they would become equally injurious to the public. In one respect the abridgment of the freedom of the press by individuals is more pernicious than by law. In the latter case, there is no *suppression;* libellous publications are followed only by fine and imprisonment. These publications generally compensate the community for the sufferings of libellers. But where the competency of individuals enables them to *suppress* literary productions entirely, high public functionaries may jeopardize the state by criminal projects without being in danger of exposure. So far, apart from other considera-

tions, the public cannot but feel concerned, in the transaction which forms the subject of this narrative.

This practice is peculiarly inauspicious in a vice-president. It is ominous of a subtle, dangerous, and unfriendly disposition. It bespeaks a desire to cherish vice by concealment, and to elevate it upon the ruins of virtue. It exhibits a disposition to controul public opinion to the prejudice of the general welfare. It is, in one word, so incompatible with our conceptions of what the vice-president of the United States ought to be, that, were I not convinced the suppression was effected with a view to promote his election to the Presidency by endeavouring to impair the character of Mr. Jefferson, I should be astonished at the act.

Let me ask why the history was suppressed? Surely it could not have been done without a motive. Was it to shelter Mr. Wood from the penalties of the law that this *patron* of *literature* and the *fine arts* suppressed the edition? Was it because the history abounded with *libels* on federal characters and his consequent fear of Mr. Wood's being seized by the talons of the law? Even if this were his motive, however we might admire and applaud his *tenderness* for the *stranger*, we could not commend the act that consigned to oblivion, an octavo volume on a most interesting subject because of the defects of one of its pages. *But it was not.* For although Mr. Burr lightly observed that the history contained libellous passages, it is plain those passages made so faint an impression upon his mind as to leave not a trace behind. Incautiously enumerating his reasons for soliciting the suppression of the history, Mr. Burr was silent upon the libels he at first stated it contained. The suppression was accomplished to attain a much greater object, one of much more value to Mr. Burr than

the *safety* of Mr. Wood. Nor will it be believed that Mr. Burr, whose private concerns, like those of other men, call for all his pecuniary resources, would voluntarily offer *twelve hundred dollars* to shield Mr. Wood from *federal* prosecutions. The story is too Quixotic to be accredited in this "Age of Reason."

Let it be admitted that Mr. Burr suppressed the history *merely* to shield Mr. Wood from probable prosecutions; how then shall we account for that *profound secrecy* which was almost to defy the all-piercing eye of omniscience? Surely Mr. Burr had no occasion to conceal so good an act from the public. If he stood on truly republican ground, he had nothing to hope from the federalists; nor had he any thing to fear from the republicans for performing a deed so meritorious, so benevolent. It would have redounded to his honour; it would have raised him in the estimation of his fellow-citizens. It would have had a tendency to obliterate those suspicions of his political conduct which he knew were entertained by honest and well informed men. Had he suppressed the edition from so praiseworthy a motive, those machinations which good men despise, and to which bad men sometimes resort, would have been unnecessary.

It is by ascertaining what *could not have been*, Mr. Burr's reason for suppressing the history, that we shall arrive at the *true* and satisfactory one. Admitting that no dereliction of sentiment on his part had taken place at the commencement of the negociation, it will not be presumed that he would suppress the history because it was *evidently republican*. That it is entitled to this respectable appellation, no man whom Mr. Van Ness shall permit to read it, can have any doubt. To what then shall we ascribe the

suppression? On the one hand to advise to conciliate the affections of the federalists who acted prominent parts in the late administration, and whose conduct was severely censured by Mr. Wood; and on the other, to represent in a novel but unfavourable light, in the *new history*, of which he was to furnish the materials, the character of Mr. Jefferson and that of several of his most distinguished friends. If it should be asked what end these machinations were to answer? The response is at hand. To prepare the way for that *union* with the *federalists* which there is reason to believe is now *half completed*; to sully the lustre and tarnish the reputation of the executive.

This the writer presumes to think is the only rational conclusion that can be drawn from this singular and unprecedented transaction. It is one which he cannot resist; it is very strongly impressed on his mind. Other circumstances too of great weight, numerous, diversified and imposing, have a powerful tendency to convince him that no confidence in future ought to be placed by *republicans*, in the vice-president.

From this *union*, however, little is to be apprehended. The influence of Mr. Burr compared with that of the executive, is as an atom in comparison of the globe we inhabit. *Out* of this state he is scarcely known; within it, *beyond* the limits of the city he may be truly said to have *no influence*; and even in the city he is universally distrusted except by *a very few individuals* who *favour his schemes from hopes of gaining by his elevation.*

It is time for "a union of all honest" *Republicans* to take place. A few individuals, desperate in fortune, devoid of good principle, of great enterprize, and unbounded ambition, however insignificant in their origin, may by national indifference, grow to a size which, like the conspiracy of *Cataline* of old, will menace the overthrow of the empire. By timely attention and spirited exertion that ruin may be averted with which the Union is in some sort now threatened.

This appeal is made to the nation at large, since the subject of it is of national concern. It is, however, peculiarly incumbent on the inhabitants of this city to frown upon the *little faction*. It is now in its infancy ; time and inattention may swell it to a giant size. Every man sincerely attached to the present order of things, and to the *peace* and *freedom* of the union, ought to *discountenance*, not only Mr. Burr, but those *few persons** who are *known* to be in league with him. We know from experience what an executive can do. The union was convulsed to its centre by the machinations of Adams. We were threatened not only with war, but the loss of freedom. It is fearful to reflect upon what our condition would in all probabily be, were Mr. Burr at the head of our government. If Mr. Adams could do so much, how much more could Mr. Burr effect ? It cannot be concealed that he is a man of *desperate fortune ;* bold, enterprizing, ambitious, and intriguing ; thirsting for military glory and *Buonapartian* fame. A man of no fixed principle, no consistency of character, of contracted views as a politician, of boundless vanity, and listless of the public good ; one who is pursuing with an " appetite keen as death, and a hand steady

* Their names shall be laid before the public at a proper season.

as time," projects disreputable to himself and injurious to the country.

Such is the character of the man who

" Fit to disturb the peace of the world"

is endeavouring by *little* arts, to supplant the chief magistrate, and to estrange the affections of the people from him, This indeed has been his uniform practice from the very moment the republicans agreed to support Mr. Jefferson as president and himself as vice president. To effect this he had agents in the different states during the presidential election. This shall hereafter be proved.

It is a matter of extreme felicity that the improper intrigues of the vice president are well known by those men in different states who are most competent to guard against them ; men whose attachment to Mr. Jefferson increase with his days ; who view with mingled emotions of regret and indignation those acts of Mr. Burr which can only tend to make him odious to the people and blast his once flattering prospects. Had the vice president consulted his true interest, he would have accompanied the wishes and expectations of the people. Predicated on and an unaccountable ignorance of his character, his calculations of them have been erroneous. The *American nation* will neither be surprized by artifice, nor subjugated by splendid deception. Duly appreciating their rights, their affections are to be won only by good offices. They love their executive for the good he has done and still does them. They repose confidence in him because he has never deceived them. Meriting and possessing their affections to an extent rarely equal-

led, he is invincible to the stratagems of the Vice-President. The majesty of the people shines resplendently in the executive; that people who burst the chains of Mr. Adams, and who will rend the *silken* cord of Mr. Burr.

The following contents are extracted *verbatim* from the suppressed history. They are here inserted to enable the reader to form some idea of the general tenor of it.

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Meeting of Congress—President's Speech—French Treaty—Proceedings of the House of Representatives—Anecdotes of Mr. Adams—Election of the President—Observations on the dismission of Pickering and M'Henry.

It may be necessary to assign our reasons for publishing the following Biographies.

Since it became generally known that the History of the Administration of Mr. Adams was suppressed by Col. Burr, his few confidential friends who are sedulously endeavouring to promote his views, have industriously sought palliations for the act. Knowing the work was suppressed, and of course, that it could never come before the public, they have thought they could with *safety* assign a *spurious* reason for its suppression. They have stated that the History was an *aristocratic* one; that it spoke in strains of unbounded *eulogium* of *federal*, and of disrespect of *Republican* characters. The History has by them been represented throughout as a *high-toned federal production*; that from *pure patriotism*, and to *spare* the republican cause, Mr. Burr not only suppressed the work, but paid twelve hundred dollars out of his private purse for the suppression!

This story has had the desired effect on many good citizens, who had it not in their power to say, "I have heard two opposite accounts on this subject, and I will therefore read the book and judge for myself." This was known to the propagators of it, who concluded they could circulate the misrepresentation without being liable to detection. The character of Mr. Hamilton was instanced which was said to be a chief d'œuvre of panegyric. To refute these calumnies, the following remarks, taken *verbatim** from the suppressed History, on the respective characters named, are here inserted. The life and character of Mr. Hamilton is *entire;* it is not a *part* of what Mr. Wood wrote in his History of that gentleman; but the *whole*. The whole of Mr. Jefferson's Biography contained in the history, would occupy about twenty pages of this narrative. That which relates to the early part of his political life, is only extracted; the whole would be too long for our purpose. It is all, however, exceedingly honourable to Mr. Jefferson, and such as every good and intelligent man would write respecting that estimable man. The facts mentioned in the extract are not Mr. Wood's; they are only cloathed in his own language. All of moment that was said in the history of Mr. Dayton is here extracted, as well as the principal part of what Mr. Wood has written in it respecting general Charles Cotesworth Pinckney. Enough is inserted in the Narrative concerning Mr. Adams to give the reader an idea of Mr. Wood's opinion of him. Of General Washington nothing was said in the history but what is hereafter stated. The remarks respecting this great man were the introductory ones of the first chapter of the history.

* For the accuracy of the extracts, we appeal to Mr. William P. Van Ness, in whose hands the whole edition now is.

BIOGRAPHY

OF

MR. JEFFERSON.

" THOMAS JEFFERSON was born in the year 1743, at Montecello, in the county of Albemarle, in Virginia—he was the eldest son of his father, who was a respectable landholder, and joint commissioner appointed with colonel Fry for settling and extending the boundary line between Virginia and North,Carolina, in 1749.

" About the age of fourteen he was sent to the university of William and Mary, in the city of Williamsburgh, a seminary which though not equal to the European schools, has yet produced several characters that in classical knowledge and legal abilities would do honour either to Cambridge or Oxford.

" The progress which young Jefferson made in the different departments of science and literature was rapid, and he obtained the degrees of the college with honour to himself and credit to his instructors. At the desire and advice of his relations, he commenced a course of law under the direction of George Wythe, now the venerable judge and sole chancellor of Virginia. Being naturally fond of philosophic pursuits, and accustomed to acute discrimination and logical discussion with his fellow students, he greatly facilitated the acquirement of legal knowledge, which he now studied as a profession.

" In 1766 he came to the bar of the supreme

court of his native state, and on his first appearance gave indication of talents that would rise to high eminence. Here he continued to practice with success and reputation until the commencement of the American revolution in 1775, when he was called forward to support the rights of his country, and for those important ends, which have been conspicuously realized in the various capacities in which he has acted.

" Mr. Jefferson is in his person tall and slender, of a fresh complexion, clear, penetrating eyes, his hair inclining to red, and of a deportment modest, affable and engaging. In early youth, the only period which fortune seems to have allotted him for a social intercourse with the world, he was in every circle its ornament, instructor and pride. A close application aided by an uncommon strength of mind, supplied the want of many European advantages, without neglecting the particular study which was the primary object of his employment: Mr. Jefferson found sufficient time to attend to the polite acquirements. He relieved the tedious fatigue of law, by improving the knowledge of geometry, astronomy and natural philosophy, which he had acquired at the university; and the research of science, he occasionally blended with the lighter and perhaps more agreeable amusements of drawing and music. In the latter art he not only arrived at that degree of mediocrity which serves to soften the passions and refine the tender feelings, but was considered among amateurs as a considerable proficient.

" In 1774, when the inhabitants of America were roused into action by the tyranny and accumulated wrongs of the British government, Mr. Jefferson

published his celebrated pamphlet, " Summary View of the Rights of British America," addressed to the king, which brought forward against the author threats of prosecution from the earl of Dunmore, then governor of Virginia; Mr. Jefferson was obnoxious to this nobleman on another account. Dunmore was in his own country considered as one of the most intemperate and dissoluted young men of his age—the climate of Virginia with the unlimited authority of a British governor, served to inflame his passions and heighten his licentious habits. His hours in place of being spent by redressing the wrongs and lightening the grievances of the Virginia planters, were devoted to the gambling table, and the indulging of the sensual appetites. A young lady of the name of Campbell the daughter of a respectable merchant in Richmond, became the victim of his unbounded armours. Her brother, an officer in the king's service, called Dunmore to account for his injured sister. The haughty governor, in place of giving the satisfaction which justice required, had him arrested and sent to England, where by the sentence of a court martial, he was deprived of his commission. A well wrote and accurate statement of this unwarrantable outrage appeared soon after in the public papers of Virginia: the author, I am informed, was a lawyer of the name of Foster, but the earl of Dunmore supposed it, from the ability displayed, to have been the production of Mr. Jefferson. His threats, however, produced no other effect than to cause Mr. Jefferson publicly to avow himself the author of the Rights of British America.

About this time he married the daughter of Mr. Wayles, an eminent counsellor in Virginia; that

affectionate partner, unfortunately no longer exists. The death of this lady in 1780, devolved on him a more weighty care, the education of two lovely daughters, their surviving issue; these have been reared under his own immediate inspection, and have accompanied his diplomatic functions whithersoever they have been directed.

It was not to be expected that a man of such conspicuous qualifications could be suffered long to remain in the shade of philosophic retirement. In the year 1775 he was elected a member of the Virginia convention, and on the 4th of August, in the same year, one of the members to represent that State, then colony of Virginia, in Congress. In this legislature, he became a distinguished and useful member, and has left many traces of sufficient importance to display his knowledge of legal jurisprudence.

In the memorable year of 1776, which seperated the U. States from their mother country, and gave the example of freedom to the monarchies of Europe, we find Mr. Jefferson advancing to a still more dignified station. He was chosen along with Benjamin Franklin, John Adams, Roger Sherman and P. R. Livingston, to draw up the declaration of our independence, an instrument which will ever be considered as the magna charta of American liberty. It was from the elegant pen of Mr. Jefferson, who was first named on the committee, that this instrument proceeded, which so long as the records of time shall endure, will perpetuate the fame of its author. He was also honoured with the public confidence, by being appointed a member of the first congress, where he sat two years, supporting a character highly respectable, and which will stand dignified in the judgment of our remotest posterity.

In the year 1778, Mr. Jefferson, being then a member of the Virginia legislature, presented to that body the act "to prevent the importation of slaves," which was enacted into a law in the month of October of the same year, and was shortly followed by another act "to authorise manumission," being the commencement of a system of general emancipation, also, proposed by him.

The first critical period in Mr. Jefferson's civil administration, was when he received the appointment of governor of Virginia in the year 1779, in the room of Patrick Henry, who was the first governor under the renovated constitution, and the successor of the Earl of Dunmore. Mr. Jefferson continued in this office until June 1781.

During these years, Mr. Jefferson had much to contend with. The State experienced three invasions, and he had not only, to combat an open enemy in the field, but to encounter the insidious snares of a secret faction, who assailed his reputation and stabbed him in the dark. They insinuated that he had abandoned the government of Virginia to its enemies, and sought personal safety by flight to the mountains, and that he likewise had refused to pay military claims in preference to those of the civil list.*

In the year 1781 under the pressure of public business, and family afflictions, Mr. Jefferson prepared his celebrated work, afterwards published in Europe, entitled "Notes on Virginia."

* In answer to these slanderous falshoods, I have transcribed the arguments of Mr Jefferson's Biographer in an English publication, entitled "Public Characters of 1801."

"In the year 1783, Mr. Jefferson was appointed to a seat in congress from whence he was nominated as embassador to the court of Spain, but the approach of peace, it is presumed, rendered his voyage unnecessary. In the following year on the 6th of May, he was nominated by that honourable body, minister plenipotentiary of the United States, to the court of France, as the successor of the venerable Franklin. From thence he communicated his negociations concerning the freedom of the tobacco trade, and the powerful opposition of the farmer's general, &c. to Mr. Jay, then our minister of foreign affairs in a letter dated the 27th of May 1786. In the letter he evinces considerable diplomatic talents and success, having gained the approbation of M. D. Vergennes and the acquiescence of M. de Calonne. He has also recommended to the people of Carolina, an improvement in the preparing their staple commodity, rice, in order to lead the Mediterranean market. In another letter to Dr. Stiles President of Yale College, dated Paris, September 1st, 1716, he displays a fund of sentiment and information sufficient to intitle him to the confidence of his country and the admiration of society.

"On the 23d of October 1786, M. de Calonne announced to Mr. Jefferson, by letter from Fontainbleau, the intention of the king of France to favour the commerce of the United States as much as possible, to double their number of the free ports, to reduce the duties which were prejudicial to the commerce with America; that after the expiration of a contract made by the farmer's general with Mr. Morris, concerning tobacco, no similar one should be permitted; and that during the existence of Mr. Morris's contract, the farmer's general should be compelled to purchase annually about fifteen hundred

thousand hogsheads of American tobacco. This regulation of the tobcco trade, though not wholly, is in conformity to the principles proposed by Mr. Jefferson."

BIOGRAPHY.

OF

MR. HAMILTON.

"As General Hamilton acted a conspicuous part during the late administration, in promoting the views of the federal interest, in combating the enemies of the British treaty, and opposing what was unjustly termed jacobin influence, it is proper that some account of that able officer and intelligent lawyer, should appear in this volume.

"Alexander Hamilton was born about the year 1753, in the island of St. Croix, his father was a merchant of some eminence, and he himself was educated to the same profession; he acted for several years as a clerk, to a counting house in that island, and acquired by an active diligence, the favour and esteem of all with whom he had connection—at the age of eighteen he was sent in the

same capacity to New-York, in which sphere of life he continued until the commencement of the revolutionary war.

"This was the theatre for which nature had destined young Hamilton; he entered into the American army, and distinguished himself by uncommon enterprize and valor. His reputation procured him the appointment of an aid-de-camp to general Washington. In the year 1780 he was promoted to the rank of colonel, and at the siege of York-town commenced the attack on one of the redoubts, the capture of which, decided the fate of lord Cornwallis and his army. The conduct of Mr. Hamilton on this occasion, was truly honourable, and in the history of his life, ought to weigh against several of those scars that have since disgraced his charactor. Previous to the assault, the Marquis de le Fayette proposed to general Washington to put to death all the British troops that should be found within the redoubts, as a retaliation for several acts of barbarity committed by the royal army. The steady and nervous mind of Washington, which was never known to yield to the virtuous prejudice, of compassion, gave his assent to the bloody order, but Mr. Hamilton (the tenderness of whose feelings has led him into error,) after the redoubts were subdued, took the conquered under his protection, and proved to his enemies that America knew how to fight, but not to murder.

"When the war was at an end and the army was disbanded, Mr. Hamilton betook himself to the study of the law; for this purpose he retired to Albany, where he secluded himself for several months, at the end of which, he appeared at the bar of New-York, where in a short

time he acquired the reputation of an able advocate in point of legal knowledge and rhetorical talents. At this period, the political sentiments of Mr. Hamilton were observed to change, from being a zealous republican and the defendant of the right of America, he gradually imbibed the tenets of aristocracy, until at length he became the admirer and advocate of every measure allied to monarchy.

"This change in Mr. Hamilton's principles, which at first proceeded from conviction, and has since been strengthened by views of interest, is easy to be accounted for.

"Mr. Hamilton unfortunately, was a native of that part of the civilized world, where tyranny and slavery prevail in a manner, even, unknown to the despots of Europe; it was utterly impossible that the habits and prejudices he contracted in infancy could ever have been eradicated. The desire of ambition and power, which poisoned the first drop of blood that flowed in his veins, could only have been suppressed by a more powerful passion: this was the passion of war. Mr. Hamilton panted after fame and glory, and joined the republican standard as the most promising field for a display of those powers he possessed. He fought for liberty with the same zeal as a Briton would engage in the support of the grand Turk or Dey of Algiers. To acquire the applause of his commander, and respect of his fellow-soldiers, was his pride and ambition. In this he was successful, and when liberty was the object of his struggle, he was a republican: but when America had procured her independence and the horrors of a civil war were at an end, Mr Hamilton had no longer a scope

✕ The sons of wealthy parents in our Southern States are here well described

for his ambition in the theatre of arms. In his study of law he perceived another part to power; his copious imagination took a rapid survey of the civil code, the fascinating structure upon which the feudol system is raised and the combined policy of English jurisprudence. In this fabric of human knowledge the production of ages, Mr. Hamilton preceived something more lofty and splendid than those simple forms which modern republicanism cultivates. The grandeur attendant on hereditary titles pleased his mind and flattered his vanity. The American tory against whom he had fought, he now began to defend, and in every suit where a loyalist was concerned, Mr. Hamilton was the royal pleader. It is a certain fact, that a great majority of the royalists in the state of New-York, owe the restoration of their property solely to the exertions of this able orator.

"Before the federal government was established, in the year 1788 Mr. Hamilton prepared a new constitution, to be composed of the following articles.*

Such a constitution as there sketched out by Mr. Hamilton, would have been a direct extirpation of the rights of Americans. Experience has proved that the number

* The constitution referred to is the one general Hamilton proposed in the convention who formed the present federal constitution.

of senators is so small, that a president may always command the acquiesence of the majority in any measure he thinks proper. If therefore, the president and senate were to hold their places for life, nothing could be expected but tyranny and curruption. With the powers confered by Mr. Hamilton, the president of the U. States would only require the title of monarch, to fit him for the company of the despots of Europe.

"In the year 1788 Mr. Hamilton was appointed secretary of the treasury: while in this department a circumstance occurred, which will ever place his character in a suspicious point of view. This is his celebrated avowed intrigue with Mrs. Reynolds, the wife of Mr. Reynolds, whose father had been in the commissary department during the revolutionary war. Reynolds and one Jacob Clingham, a clerk in the employment of Mr. Muhlenburgh, were arrested towards the close of 1792, at the instance of Mr. Wollcot the comptroller of the treasury, on a charge for supposition of perjury. Clingham procured bail but Reynolds did not; when the latter was in custody, Clingham applied to Mr. Muhlenburgh for his aid in behalf of himself and Reynolds, and repeatedly dropped hints, that Reynolds knew several very improper transactions of Mr. Hamilton, signifying that he was deeply concerned in speculation, and that he had it in his power, even, to hang him. This information created such uneasiness in the mind of Mr. Muhlenburgh that he consulted two of his friends, Mr. Munroe and Mr. Venable, on the subject, they waited on Reynolds, who appeared to confirm the report made by Clingham, and added, he could not communicate the particulars as he was apprehensive it might prevent his discharge, but what he

would disclose the whole when liberated ; he procured his discharge through the intereft of Hamilton, the morning after the visit to Munroe and Venable, and immediately absconded.

" The sudden enlargement and flight of Reynolds, were additional proofs of the truth of what Clingham had suggefted. Messrs. Mulenburgh, Munroe, and Venable, in order to obtain some information respecting the singular story, waited upon Mrs. Reynolds, the wife of the run-away, they found her alone, and in a state extremely agitated ; after some difficulty, they obtained the following particulars ; that colonel Hamilton and her husband had been for some time in the habit of correspondence, but at the request of the former, and in the absence of the latter, she had burned almost all the letters ; that colonel Hamilton offered her his assistance to go to her friends, and he also advised that her husband should leave this country not to be seen again, in which case he would give her something clever.

" Mrs. Reynolds also told Clingham, that her husband received from colonel Hamilton at one time, 1100 dollars ; Reynolds himself said, that colonel Hamilton had made 30,000 dollars by speculation, and had supplied him with money to speculate.

" Clingham reported that after Reynolds was discharged, which was about 8 or 9 o'clock in the evening, he (Reynolds) sent a letter about 12 o'clock at night, to colonel Hamilton by a girl, whom Reynolds followed to the door. When the girl returned, he in-

formed Clingham that he need not go out of town that night, but would call upon colonel Hamilton next morning.

" These are the general particulars respecting this intricate correspondence, contained in the reports of Messrs. Muhlenburg, Munroe and Venable, which were made public by Mr. Calender in the year 1796.

" Mr. Hamilton immediately came forward with his defence, or rather a confession of a crime even of a more henious complexion than pecuniary speculation. He avowed himself to the world to have been the seducer of an amiable though unfortunate woman.

" No words can paint the baseness of this action more forcibly than the language of Mr. Hamilton. " The charge against me is a connection with one James Reynolds, for purposes of improper pecuniary speculation: my real crime is an amorous connection with his wife, for a considerable time, with his privity and connivance.

" This confession is not made without a blush; I cannot be the appoligist of any vice, because the ardor of passion may have made it mine. I can never cease to condemn myself for the pang which it may inflict in a bosom eminently entitled to all my gratitude, fidelity and love: but that bosom will approve, that even at so great an expence, I would effectually wipe away a more serious stain, from a name which it cherishes with no less elevation than tenderness. The

public too, will, I trust, excuse the confession, the necessity of it to my defence against a more heinous charge, could alone have extorted from me so painful an indecorum."

" Mr. Hamilton, by his own account, became acquainted with Mr. Reynolds in the following manner. Some time in the summer of 1790, a woman called at his house in the city of Philadelphia, and asked to speak with him in private, he of course attended her into a room apart from the family; with a seeming air of affliction she informed him that she was daughter of Mr. Lewis, sister to Mr. G. Livingston of the State of New-York, and wife to Mr. Reynolds, whose father was in the commissary department during the war with Great-Britain: that her husband, who for a long time had treated her very cruelly, had lately left her to live with another woman, and in so destitute a condition, that though desirous of returning to her friends, she had not the means: that knowing colonel Hamilton was a citizen of New-York, and a generous man, she had taken the liberty to apply to his humanity for assistance.

" Mr. Hamilton says, that he was disposed upon hearing her story, to afford her assistance, but it not being convenient for him at the moment, he requested the place of her residence. She very readily relieved his anxiety, and gave him the street and number of the house where she lodged. Towards evening he put a bank-bill in his pocket, and making some apology to Mrs. Hamilton, went off to administer comfort to the distressed female. He enquired for Mrs. Reynolds and was shown up stairs, at the head

of which the lady met him, and conducted him into her bed-room. He took the bill out of his pocket and slipped it into her hand, some tender conversation then ensued, from which it was quickly apparent (says Mr. Hamilton) "that other than pecuniary consolation would be acceptable."

Such was the nature, according to Mr. Hamilton, of his connection with Reynolds and his wife. He rambled for 18 months in this scene of pollution, and squandered by all accounts, above 1200 dollars, to conceal the intrigue from his loving spouse. Those who experience the same tender feelings with Mr. Hamilton, may give credit to his tale of shame; but the cold hearted enquirer will more probably assign his profligacy to a different cause, at any rate he will allow that a person of such amorous habits was by no means qualified to fill the office of secretary of the Treasury.

"The next important incident in the history of Mr. Hamilton, is his defence of the British treaty, he appointed a day to meet its opponents, and convince them by argument, of the benefits arising to the United States from the articles it contained.

"No place is more fit for a display of logical reason than the assembly of a tumultuous mob. The rhetoric of Mr Hamilton was soon overpowered by hisses and shouts of reproach. When he was thus prevented from advocating its cause by the force of oratory, he had recourse to the eloquence of the pen, and published a series of letters under the signature of Camillus, in defence of the British treaty.

" These letters, though the sentiments they contain are inimical to the interest of this country, ought, notwithstanding, to be held in the highest veneration by every lover of literature. The correct style of language which they exhibit, will long be a model of perfection to Americans, and without laying claim to the gift of prophecy, I may safely assert, that the pages of Camillus will be read when the British treaty and the name of governor Jay will be otherwise buried in oblivion.

" Mr. Hamilton has been severely censured, and perhaps with justice, as being the author of the funding system ; the promoter of the snuff excise law, that passed the 5th of June, 1794, and the causes of the war of 1790, with the north-western Indians.

" Mr. Hamilton was in 1798, appointed inspector general and commander in chief next to Washington, of the army of the United States. This promotion the merits of Mr. Hamilton certainly deserved. His abilities in this respect dare not be doubted ; and if ever it should be the misfortune of America to be involved in a war while Mr. Hamilton lives, it would be both imprudent and unjust, were he deprived of a principal command.

" The literary fame of general Washington is said to have been raised on the talents of Alexander Hamilton, and report even whispers that Hamilton himself claims the merit of Washington's letters, and that he has boasted of receiving letters from gen. Washington with the word private wrote on the back of them,

and a cross drawn over the seal. After opening such a parcel, the contents were, "*Dear Hamilton put this into style for me,*" prefixed to some speech or letter inclosed. The letters of Washington are, however, much inferior to those of Hamilton, and differ remarkably in point of style. Most probable they no more received the new correction of Hamilton, than the lectures of Sir Joshua Reynolds did the finishing stroke of Edmund Burke.

"Such are the general outlines of the life and character of Alexander Hamilton. As a soldier and scholar he has rendered most eminent services to the United States, but as a political character he has been the greatest misfortune."

OF GENERAL WASHINGTON.

(Extracted from Mr. Wood's History.)

"The United States of America enjoyed under the administration of the illustrious Washington, all those advantages which result from the prudent policy of a virtuous magistrate. The peaceful system which he pursued, repaired in a great measure, the injuries sustained by a long and expensive civil war. His interests and passions were the same as those of the people, and a constant communication of good offices kept alive their attachments."

OF JONATHAN DAYTON.

(Extracted from Mr. Wood's History.)

"JONATHAN DAYTON, of New-Jersey, the late speaker of Congress, is notorious from Boston to Georgia. The deeds of the other members of Congress, were scarcely known beyond the circles of their respective States, but the speculations of this man have rung throughout the western world. They are unfolded in sixteen letters to one Francis Childs, which were made public by a bill of complaint, which Dayton and one Lawrence presented to the Chancellor of New-York against Childs. The letters will speak for themselves; for any comment upon such a scheme would only tend to render stale and less flagrant the rascality of the transaction. Some crimes are so horrible in their nature as will not endure the lash of censure, and the actions of Dayton are of this class."

OF CHARLES COTESWORTH PINCKNEY.

(Extracted from Mr. Wood's History.)

"In 1794, Colonel Pinckney was appointed Commander in Chief of the Militia of South-Carolina, which station he held until his memorable embassy to France: the particulars of that diplomatic expedi-

tion have been already narrated. *As a soldier*, General Pinckney deserves every encomium of applause; but as a *political character*, although he does not possess so much integrity as Hamilton, yet it would be great injustice to place him on the same scale with Mr. Adams, or even the most virtuous of his adherents. General Pinckney possesses at least some principles of honor, and a share of judgment that will always prevent him from covering his country with disgrace."

CHAPTER XII.

Quarrel at Trenton between Mr. Adams and his ministers—Hamilton's letter respecting their differences—Appointment of an embassy to France—Characters of the Envoys—Anecdotes of Adams and Franklin—Adams's jealousy and dislike to Franklin—Adams's endeavour to calumniate Franklin—Vindication of Franklin—Memoirs of Alexander Hamilton.

"IN the town of Trenton, the capital of New-Jersey, the first public schism in the federal cabinet took place.

"The particular expressions which passed on this occasion, between the President and his ministers never transpired; but from the printed letter addressed to Mr. Adams, by General Hamilton, we are informed of the principal cause of their difference.

"Mr. Hamilton asserts, that after the failure of the Pinckney embassy to France. Mr. Adams arrived at Philadelphia, from his seat at Quincy, and that "the tone of his mind seemed to have been raised rather than depressed." That his counsellors suggested to him that it might be expedient to insert in his speech to Congress a sentiment of this import.

"That after the repeatedly rejected advances of this country, its dignity required that it should be left with France in future to make the first overture; that if desirous of reconciliation, she should evince the disposition by sending a minister to this government, he would be received with the due respect to his character, and treated with the frankness of a sincere desire of accommodation."

Mr. Adams received this suggestion in a manner both indignant and intemperate, and declared, "*That if France should send a minister to-morrow, he would order him back the day after.* But in less (says Mr. Hamilton) than forty-eight hours from this extraordinary sally, the mind of Mr. Adams underwent a total revolution. "He resolved not only to insert in his speech the sentiment which had been proposed to him, but to go farther, and to declare, that if France would give explicit assurances of receiving a minister from this country with due respect, he would send one."

"In vain did Pickering and M'Henry oppose this resolution. Mr. Adams obstinately persisted and the declaration was introduced.

"Mr. Adams appears afterwards to have nominated Mr. Murray as Envoy to the French Republic, without previous communication with any of his ministers. Shortly after he nominated two more, Judge Elsworth and Mr. Davie.

"Mr. Elsworth's talents were no doubt great, but his opinions respecting law were formed upon the Mansfield system. His decision in the case of Captain Williams, was directly opposed to the law of nations, and to the former practice of the American courts. His knowledge of European affairs was also very limited in theory as well as practice.

"George Davie was better calculated for the mission. This gentleman was about forty years of age; possessed of engaging manners an and easy address; he had been educated at Princeton College; served with reputation

in the revolutionary war; afterwards studied the profession of the law, and previous to his appointment, was made a General in the provisional army, and elected governor of North-Carolina.

"When the news of the revolution in the Directory arrived, Mr Hamilton says, that Mr. Adams was then at his seat in Massachusetts, and that his ministers addressed to him a joint letter, communicating the intelligence, and submitting to his consideration, whether that event ought not to suspend the projected mission. Mr. Adams, in reply, directed the preparation of a draft of instruction for the envoys, and intimated that their departure should be suspended for some time.

"Mr. Adams arrived soon after at Trenton, about the 17th of October, where he held a council with his ministers. Judge Elsworth and general Hamilton were also present, though not at the desire of Mr. Adams. Mr. Hamilton says in his letter, that he arrived at Trenton a short time before the President, and Chief Justice Elsworth a short time after him; that the object of his own journey was to concert with the Secretary at War, certain arrangements for the future disposition of the Western Army, and that the cause of Judge Elsworth's arrival was to meet his colleague, Governor Davie, at the seat of government. "Yet these simple and accidental occurrences," says Mr. Hamilton, "were to the jealous mind of Mr. Adams, *confirmations strong* of some mischievous plot against his independence."

"Mr. Adams is said, at this memorable meeting, to have observed a profound silence on the question, whether or not it was expedient that the mission should pro-

ceed. His secretaries Pickering and M'Henry, as also General Hamilton, disapproved of the propriety of the embassy, and endeavoured to bring the President over to their opinion, but their arts were of no avail. The morning after the instructions were settled, he signified to Mr. Pickering, that the envoys were ready to depart.

"This resolution of the President was, by the Hamiltonian party, regarded as bad policy, and incompatible with the dignity of Americans. By the anti-federalists, it was, on the contrary, esteemed a promising sentiment of repentance; but if we examine carefully the character and motives of Mr. Adams, it will appear that he was induced to this conciliatory measure, neither from a disrespect to his country, nor from the commendable desire of promoting republicanism; but most probably with the basedesign of rendering odious the measures of his Secretaries, the power of whom his jealousy began to dread.

"The vain and weak judgment of Mr. Adams easily figured, that if Pickney, Hamilton and Pickering were removed from the road to power, he might by courting popular applause, rise on the shoulders of the people to an imperial throne, from whence he and his posterity might dictate to the inhabitants of half the globe.

"No man's vanity can reasonably be supposed to exceed that of Mr. Adams. Weakness in intellect, which is generally the attendant of pride, is the predominant mark in his character. These causes render his temper unsufferable to his most intimate friends. On many occasions M. Hamilton says, "he is liable to paroxisms of anger, which deprive him of self-command, and produce very outrageous behaviour to those who approach him." But

the eternal rancour which Mr. Adams always evinced aganst the great and good Franklin, is the most convincing proof, both of his vanity and the weakness of his understanding; several well-attested anecdotes confirm the truth of this assertion.

"During the embassy of Franklin, Adams and Lee at Paris, a fete was given in honour of America, by a Mrs. Bertrand, the lady of a nobleman who acted in capacity of lord in waiting to the King. Mrs. Bertrand was one of those celebrated female politicians, who used to be in the employ of the court, for the purpose of discovering, by her intrigues, the secret springs and intentions of foreign cabinets; she was also a lady of science, and the principle patroness of the arts in Paris. Her veneration for Franklin was equal to her contempt for Mr. Adams; but Adams and Lee, with almost every American of education then at Paris, were of course invited to partake of the pleasures of an entertainment, intended as a compliment to their country. During the performance of a theatrical piece, the portrait of Franklin was introduced on the stage—an universal burst of applause ensued which wounded the feelings of Mr. Adams to such a degree, that he feigned sickness and left the performance.*

"Mr. Adams soon after, in a letter to a friend in this country, complained, "we are all here mere satellites, revolving in the orbet of the planet Franklin, borrowing all our light from him, and unable to diffuse any of our own through his superior influence."

* Dr. James Smith now in New-York, was present and seated near Mr. Adams at the above fete.

"During his administration Mr. Adams gave countenance to every calumny which reflected upon the memory of that great philosopher; he enjoyed with secret triumph, the vulgar and slanderous abuse which was darted by the miscreant Porcupine, at Franklin's discoveries. He was even fond and sedulous, when occasion offered to cast a shade over his moral and political reputation; but the most daring and villainous scheme in which it is reported Mr. Adams assisted to blacken the character of that illustrious man, and wound the feelings of his relations, was an attempt to accuse him of public peculation.

"In the early part of the American revolution, a million of livres was lent us by the French government. After Franklin's death the enemies of liberty spread abroad insinuations, that Dr. Franklin had appropriated this money to himself! They contrived also to possess themselves of all the public papers by which his defendants could vindicate his reputation. This was done in the most artful manner. The sum of £. 15,000 sterling, was given to Mr. Charles Dilly, a book-seller in London (who had contracted to publish a history of his life) to purchase all his documents which he had received from the family of Dr. Franklin. The only remaining channel of truth were the papers in possession of of administration. These were applied for, but refused in the most contemptuous manner.

"Mr. Adams was not to be disturbed, or the offices of the treasury ransacked, to please the whims of a few individuals," was the answer reported to be given. When, however, the recent change in the executive took place, and the records of state were brought forth from the cells of federal fraud, to blush at public inspection;

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debt, though it had been objected to under
ington. When Gouverneur Morris was at Paris, as our minister, he took advantage of the passions of the revolutionary period, and addressed a letter to the committee of public safety, wherein he observed, "that it was time indeed to throw off that secrecy which involved in obscurity the transactions of cabinets and the councils of despots. The American and French republics could have no secrets. Their acts were to be regulated by principles, not actuated by sordid or personal interests." He therefore solicited an enquiry into the mode by which the million in question had been bestowed, and to whom. The political fanaticism of the day was caught by the jesuital address of the woodenlegged envoy, and an account was rendered as it appeared on the public record of the royal department of foreign affairs.

"The friends of Mr. Adams had insinuated the money was given to Dr. Franklin, Gouverneur Morris was, therefore, entrusted to carry the enquiry up to the source. After examination, he discovered that the sum had been appropriated and lent to America before Dr. Franklin left this country. The suspicion was, therefore, transferred to Silas Deane; it was concluded, that Deane could not have the money without Dr. Franklin partaking of the spoil or conniving at the robbery. Upon farther investigation, it was found that the money was given even before Deane arrived in France. This was a dilemma which had not been foreseen; but having proceeded so far, it was necessary to go the whole length; and upon application by M. *Morris* an official copy of the receipt was given, which is

...nich states that the ... account of Virginia, by ... a Mr. Chevallier, who acted as ... his banker, and lives in the city of Richmond, has been debited in his account with the United States for that million.*

"All these facts must have been known to the late administration; but John Adams felt neither the generosity nor the justice due to the memory of Franklin, or the honour of his country to reveal the truth."

* This circumstance I have from a near relative of Dr. Franklin, upon whose veracity I can place the greatest reliance.

FINIS.

the facts appeared to be, viz. that the American government was charged with the sum in question, and it had been allowed in the general liquidation of the French debt, though it had been objected to under Gen. Washington. When Gouverneur Morris was at Paris, as our minister, he took advantage of the passions of the revolutionary period, and addressed a letter to the committee of public safety, wherein he observed, "that it was time indeed to throw off that secrecy which involved in obscurity the transactions of cabinets and the councils of despots. The American and French republics could have no secrets. Their acts were to be regulated by principles, not actuated by sordid or personal interests." He therefore solicited an enquiry into the mode by which the million in question had been bestowed, and to whom. The political fanaticism of the day was caught by the jesuital address of the woodenlegged envoy, and an account was rendered as it appeared on the public record of the royal department of foreign affairs.

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now on the records of government, which shews that the money was procured from the count of Vergennes, by *Baron Beaumarchais*; and a M. Chevalier, who acted as agent for this banker, and lives in the city of Richmond, has been debited in his account with the United States for that million.*

"All these facts must have been known to the late administration; but John Adams felt neither the generosity nor the justice due to the memory of Franklin, or the honour of his country to reveal the truth."

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